

THE New Wine PRESS

Volume 26 No 3 • November 2017





Let us serve God with holy joy.

-St. Gaspar del Bufalo, founder of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood

Explore God's calling among the Precious Blood family.

Precious Blood Volunteers • Companions • Sisters • Brothers • Priests

Visit livepreciousblood.org



THE New Wine PRESS

Volume 26 No. 3 • November 2017

Contents

All That Matters	2
Fr. Alvin L. Herber, C.P.P.S.	3
A New Creation.....	4
History Has Its Eyes on Us	7
2017 Companions Retreat Reflection.....	9
Bursting Bubbles.....	10
South Side Hospitality	11
Love is Coming for Us All: An Advent Reflection	12

Cover photo: Incense burning during the interprovincial gathering in Techy, Illinois

The Society of the Precious Blood is a fraternal community of priests and brothers founded by St. Gaspar in 1815. Bonded through charity by a promise of fidelity, we are prayerfully motivated by the spirituality of the precious blood of Jesus Christ to serve the needs of the Church as discerned through the signs of the times and in the light of the Gospel.

The Kansas City Province—incorporated members, covenanted companions, and candidates—united in prayer, service and mutual support, characterized by the tradition of its American predecessors, are missionaries of these times with diverse gifts and ministries. In a spirit of joy, we strive to serve all people—especially the poor—with care and compassion, hope and hospitality.

The New Wine Press seeks to remain faithful to the charism of our founder, St. Gaspar, and the spirituality of the Blood of Christ with its emphasis on reconciliation, renewal and refounding. We accept and encourage unsolicited manuscripts and letters to the editor.

THE New Wine PRESS

Missionaries of the Precious Blood
Kansas City Province

Precious Blood Center
P.O. Box 339
Liberty, MO 64069-0339
816.781.4344
www.preciousbloodkc.org

Editor
Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S.
rbayukcpps@mac.com

Layout & Design
Margaret Haik
communications@preciousbloodkc.org

Printed on recycled paper by
McDonald Business Forms
Overland Park, Kansas



All That Matters

by Fr. Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S., Editor

In this issue, there is some looking back as we remember with gratitude the life and service of one of our members, Fr. Al Herber. There is also much looking forward in the articles that reflect on the recent gathering of our two American provinces, and the decisions that resulted. And yet we live in the present. The land of hope or a place of fear, perhaps.

During the funeral Mass this week for Fr. Herber we heard the familiar words, “Life is changed, not ended.” That is always a reminder to me of the call to hold firm in faith in the midst of loss and saying goodbye to something or someone—and having gratitude for the change which leads us forward, even if sometimes painfully.

According to the author Margaret Wheatley, in the Buddhist tradition, there is an understanding that fear and hope arise from looking backward or forward, and the present moment is the only place where one can see clearly, unclouded by either hope or fear. She writes: “In reflecting on the reality of fear and hope, it takes enormous effort and discipline to keep calling ourselves back to the present moment, especially when we see that decisions being made in the present are harming people or will have disastrous impacts in the future. Yet only in the present moment, free from hope and fear, do we receive the gifts of clarity and resolve. This clarity reveals ‘right action’—those actions that feel genuinely appropriate in this moment without any concern about whether they will succeed or not.... It isn’t outcomes that matter. It’s people, our relationships, that give meaning to our struggles. If we free ourselves from hope and fear, from having to succeed, we discover that it becomes easier to love. We stop scapegoating, we stop blaming, and we stop being disappointed in each other. We realize that we truly are in this together, and that’s all that matters.”

Ten years ago, as our province was then already grappling with the challenge and promise of change moving into the future, I wrote, “This time of discernment and decision places before us our diminishment, our enthusiasm, our hope, our letting go and hanging on, our opportunities, and our care for each other and God’s people.” This is still true today.

One of my favorite poets, Kathleen Norris, describes giving birth as “beginning the long good-bye.” Bringing someone or something new to life is often a painful process, and involves “saying good-bye.” To give birth to anything, to create something new, whether that be a child, an idea, a dream, or a vision for the present and future, is to prepare to let go. And to remember that being together in this is all that matters. †

Fr. Alvin L. Herber, C.P.P.S.

Fr. Phil Smith, C.P.P.S., Atlantic Province



Fr. Alvin L. Herber, C.P.P.S., 93, a member of the Kansas City Province, died on October 12, 2017 at St. Charles Center in Carthage, Ohio. Born August 10, 1924 in Hessen

Fr. Alvin Herber, C.P.P.S. Cassel, Indiana, he was ordained in 1950 at St. Charles Seminary in Carthage.

With the exception of four years as Director of Seminarians at St. Joseph College in Rensselaer, Indiana and three years as chaplain and instructor at Sacred Heart College in Wichita, Kansas, he served in a variety of parishes during his many years of active ministry. His longest term as pastor was at St. James Parish in Liberty, Missouri where he oversaw the construction of the present church, rectory, and school.

After 54 years of service to the Church and his community, he moved to St. Charles Center, Carthage, Ohio, where he resided until his death.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Tuesday, October 17th at St. Charles Center, Carthage, Ohio. Fr. Phil Smith, C.P.P.S., who served with Fr. Herber for a number of years at St. James Parish, preached. What follows are excerpts from his homily.

To understand Al Herber, we go to our readings today and both of them speak in a way about vision. John takes us in his dream to that wonderful abiding place where there will be no more tears, no more sadness, no more pain, but only joy, happiness, and peace. And then in the gospel we find Jesus assuring his followers that his house has many dwelling places. And even though at times we may not know the way, he shows us, because he is the Way.

To understand Al Herber, I believe you must understand first of all that he approached you as an authority, as one who knew the answers. He was a

challenge—or as one parishioner in Liberty said, “He was a hard nut to crack!” But another person shared with me how she discovered a passionate and compassionate heart beneath the seemingly hard exterior.

Al was a man who had his own conversion experience. While pastor in Garden City, Kansas he took part in two events that I believe ultimately transformed him. The hard shell began to crack. He went to Pecos, New Mexico to make a retreat, and at that time began to realize that one could be human and be in love with Jesus—and share it without fear. During this same period of time he took part in a Marriage Encounter. He knew that he needed to change. Both experiences allowed him to see that the more we are human the more we realize that we are also divine.

Al always had an open heart, but also a vision. And when he was transferred from Garden City to Liberty, Missouri that vision became ever more real. He was asked to build a new church. He was always proud of the fact that the Missionaries of the Precious Blood eventually staffed St. James. Whenever Fr. Al came into the church, he wanted people to know that we were Precious Blood Missionaries, so he often wore the traditional cassock with the Mission Cross. It got to the point where one parishioner said, “It’s either a Precious Blood feast or he’s going to ask us for more money!”

Jesus in the gospel said to his followers, “You know where I’m going.” And Thomas said, “Lord, how can we know the way. We don’t know where you are going.” When Al Herber was pastor at St. James, he built the parish up and gave the parish a new spirit, a new life. His heart, soul, mind, and body were dedicated to the welfare of the people wherever he served. He was a man who had a vision, a vision that the Church is indeed the people of God. He believed very much in the vision of Vatican II. He knew that the Church had to have a change of heart. He himself came to realize that he had to have a change of heart.

Al knew that he had to raise a lot of money to build, and knew that they didn’t have the money, so they had to borrow. After the place was built, he used to say around 9:00 each evening, “It’s time to

continued on page 8



Participants of the interprovincial gathering in Techny, Illinois

A New Creation

by Jean Giesige, Director of Communications for the Cincinnati Province

Members and Companions who took part in the interprovincial gathering in Techny, Illinois, at the end of September knew when they walked into the meeting room that they had been assigned to a particular round table. That much was set up ahead of time. At each table, they had been grouped with intentional diversity: some younger, some older, some from the Cincinnati Province, some from the Kansas City Province, a Companion where possible. Table leaders had been appointed ahead of time as well, to eliminate that awkward moment when no one wants to take charge.

Beyond that, all were free to roam and sit and eat and worship and visit and joke and share stories wherever they pleased. It was at that point that Fr. Ken Schnipke, C.P.P.S., who'd been responsible for scouting locations for the meeting and so was tracking how it was going, noticed a curious phenomenon: "I was watching—and at the meals, and at socials: all were intermixed. There was never a table of all Cincinnati members or all Kansas City members."

Or maybe it wasn't a curious phenomenon. Maybe it was just a natural occurrence when family gets together. Because by the end of the week at Techny, the members who were there averred that they would work toward a future together.

The statement that came from the gathering proclaimed that the two provinces "are being called to create a new reality for the Congregation in the United States," and that "this new creation, in the form

of a single province, will provide us with the energy, creativity and vitality to share our spirituality in our changing context."

The how, when and where of all that have yet to be determined, though the two provincial councils will meet November 7 in Liberty, Missouri, to continue the conversation. But the who and the why were identified at Techny. The who is everybody: members, candidates/seminarians and Companions. The why is because after many years of talking, of combined efforts that sometimes succeeded and sometimes did not, after a profound realization that the mission supersedes provincial boundaries and when allowed to stretch and grow can kindle a fire in every heart, it's time.

"This gathering was about exploring what's possible," said Fr. Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S., provincial director of the Kansas City Province. "We're framing this as a new creation rather than a merger. We're talking about starting something new, which will be the great challenge. We're not simply putting two provinces together. It's a new creation: that's the language we have to keep focusing on."

The prospect of something new is what is bringing light and energy to the dialogue, added Fr. Larry Hemmelgarn, C.P.P.S., provincial director of the Cincinnati Province. "If, in bringing the two provinces together, all we're doing is combining administrations, that's not all that exciting," he said. "What it's really all about is how do we best use our resources,

put our creative energies together, and create something new?”

Provincial leadership had been preparing for the gathering for more than a year, and had encouraged members to think and dream and talk about the possibilities for much longer than that. Even so, no one really knew how the conversation would go once everyone had settled into those assigned seats at Techny. “I don’t think anybody was sure what was going to happen,” Fr. Hemmelgarn said.

There were people there who saw little reason to delay what to them seems like a natural step forward into a hopeful future. These included, certainly, younger members who had gone through some or all of their years of formation in a joint program shared by the two provinces.

“This was the first official gathering between members of the Kansas City and Cincinnati Provinces I’d ever attended since I’d been even discerning in this Community,” said Fr. Jim Smith, C.P.P.S., a member of the Cincinnati Province who was ordained in July. “There have been informal events, but this was the first official one where we were actually talking about who we are and who we will be in the future. That was weird for me—the weirdness being, ‘Why has this not happened yet?’”

There were long days of meetings, bracketed by profound shared Morning and Evening Prayer. There was the sense that there was a lot of work to do, and a short time to do it meaningfully. The group heard prepared talks by members and Companions, talked among the tables, expressed doubts and fears, dreams and goals. They asked a lot of questions that as of now are unanswerable.

For the first few sessions, there was a sense that the future was hanging in the balance. But the future can’t stay balanced; it continues to move forward, with or without consensus, with or without a plan. Helped by facilitator Kevin McClone of Catholic Theological Union, the group began to sense that it had found a common ground that perhaps was previously undiscovered territory.

“There was an excitement there,” said Fr. Bill Walter, C.P.P.S., who at 83 was the oldest member present. “I was surprised at that. That excitement: that was something that I did not experience personally 10

years ago. At that time, I was thinking, ‘We’re going along okay, so why change?’ But now I think we need something new. We’re living in a different world. That was a shift for me, and for some others too.”

Fr. Walter sees it in his own ministry at St. Francis Xavier in St. Joseph, Missouri, a parish that was founded by the Missionaries in 1891. The large and thriving parish used to have three or sometimes four priests on staff, but now has two—and he admits that at 83, he can’t keep track of everything that’s going on there. The reality of fewer priests and religious, at least in his ministry, “smacks you in the face every day,” he said.

But a spark of new life may come from an examination: who are we, and what are we called to do? Most acknowledge that the Missionaries cannot realistically keep up with all of the ministry commitments they now carry, especially as members continue to age. The challenge is not to be crushed by those commitments, said Fr. Mark Miller, C.P.P.S., but to find a new way to live out the common mission.

Sharing thoughts during one of the sessions



“The focus always has to be not so much on what are we leaving behind, but how are we moving forward? What is the purpose of our moving? How do we define that as hearing and responding to the cry of the blood?” Fr. Miller said. “We have to more and more define ourselves with that kind of language so people begin to understand that we have a mission, and that sometimes this mission appears on the surface to be somewhat different than what we’ve had in the past. That’s one way of beginning.”

“To me, it’s not just a matter of looking at our internal structure. Rather, the question is, how do we

continued on page 6

respond to the needs out there? To say, ‘This is where our spirituality and charism is needed today.’ Much like how we started the Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation. Or how we started our new ministries in California. It’s not a matter of simply, as we used to say, ‘filling slots.’ We should be inviting people to share where their passion is, in a sense give witness to our spirituality and our mission, always in a context of our charism as well as community life.”

That’s a lot to ponder. And it’s going to take a while, said the two provincial directors. “Really, we’re just at the beginning of what will be a rather lengthy process,” Fr. Nassal said. “There is no timetable at this point. There’s a lot of work to be done.” He noted that any action to combine, merge or create a new province would have to be approved by the major superiors of the C.P.P.S.

“Basically, the decision of the group was to empower the two provincial councils to figure out a way to move forward,” Fr. Hemmelgarn added. “At the November 7th meeting, we’ll be looking at appointing a task force to move the process forward. But we have not even begun to look at who might be on that task force.”

Frs. Clarence Williams and Ron Will



He surmises that the work will also involve subcommittees that will take on specific tasks. It will require both visionaries, who dream big, and detail people, who can make sense of the process. And it will require careful listening to people’s concerns and questions. The Missionaries also will be talking with other religious communities that have gone through a similar evolution.

It’s going to require patience. Fr. Nassal, who stressed that Companions will be an important part of the new creation, compares it with the beginnings of the Companions Movement. “Early in that process, there were people who wanted to nail everything down. Twenty-five years later, we’re still living our way into it. It’s still evolving,” he said. “Obviously at some point, we have to put a structure together—but we’re not near that point yet.”



Companion Pat Large speaking during the gathering

Companion Pat Large, who chairs the Companions council, appreciates the work and diplomacy and skill required in bringing together a group of people from disparate backgrounds and melding them into one body. It’s not that different from most other church work, which involves the ongoing creation of the body of Christ.

Large and other Companions were at Techny, which was “an honor,” she said. She felt privileged to see it unfold. She appreciated the tone set by Fr. Hemmelgarn and Fr. Nassal, who early in the day on Tuesday spoke to the gathering together, conversationally and without notes, setting a model of collaboration that everyone could see and soak in.

And, in the end, join in. There was a point on Wednesday when the facilitator asked for a show of hands of who was in favor of moving forward. It must have seemed somewhat inconclusive to him, because then he asked instead for all those in favor to stand. “Within five seconds, everybody was standing up,” marveled Fr. Walter. Young and old, Kansas City and Cincinnati, members and Companions: all were standing together.

And beyond that, Pat Large noted, all were asked to write a covenant, their own commitment to the new creation. As a long-time Companion, she has some experience with the writing of covenants. “Since we had gotten all of our work done, we actually had time to do that, together in the meeting room, without being rushed. And as I looked around the room at people writing their covenants, you could have heard a pin drop. I had the sense that we were making our first covenants in the new creation. And that was very special to me.” ✠

History Has Its Eyes on Us

by Vicky Otto, *Precious Blood Companions* Director

The poet Walt Whitman wrote, “O me! O life! Of the questions of these recurring; of the endless trains of the faithless...of cities filled with the foolish; what good amid these, O Me, O life? Answer, that you are here—that life exists, and identity, that powerful play goes on and you may contribute a verse. That the powerful play goes on and you may contribute a verse. What will your verse be?” Looking into the future allows us to dream and imagine what the future may be, and if we allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit the possibilities can be endless and the future shines with hope. Today I ask you to just sit back for a moment and dream. “That the powerful play goes on and you may contribute a verse.” What will our verse be?

As a Companion, I find looking into the future comes easily, because thanks to a dream, that is how the Companion movement was created. People—many who are sitting in the room today—looked into the future and dreamt of a way for lay men and women to enter into relationship with the Missionaries of the Precious Blood and work side by side with them, animated by the charism of Saint Gaspar. I stand here today—along with the over five hundred Companions across the United States—because people had the courage to dream big and work to make that dream a reality. It is that same spirit that allows me to continue to build on the dream that began over 25 years ago.

What verses would I add to our dreams and hopes for the future? The first verse would be that all our covenanted Companions are living out our vision statement: stepping out, standing up and speaking clearly about the Precious Blood of Jesus. Our world desperately needs the healing of inclusion and reconciliation that our spirituality offers. My hope is the Companions will continue to be courageous and bold enough to speak out and share these sentiments with the world through all the ways they minister, that they stand ready and able to be a source of evangelization in the community and throughout our country. Our community may be small but our spirituality is big and is desperately needed today. Companions can help to make the Missionaries of the Precious Blood a resource of reconciliation and renewal in the Church. They can continue to live out their spirituality through their outreach to the communities in which they live

and serve; continue to honor and foster their relationships with all the Missionaries of the Precious Blood; and join with Missionaries in ministry around the country as we stand with those who are on the margins, those who long for a place where they can feel safe and feel loved.



Liturgical Celebration during the gathering at Techny Towers

different ways across the congregation. Despite this, there are talents and gifts that can be shared for the benefit of the community. We can learn and support each other in our various ministries as lay people in the world today. And we can support each other and as we work with our brothers in this congregation.

The third verse is my dream that youth and young men and women will eagerly discern and answer a calling to become a Companion. As a community, we need these voices to remain relevant in the world today. How do we widen our circles to a younger generation? How do we widen our circles when these voices want to share their gifts and talents and are often told that “This is the way we have always done it?” We must be willing to step out and form these new relationships that may challenge and push us. We must form relationships that not only help youth and young adults, but help us to grow as well. We can and we must work now to find a way where we can build these relationships which allow all voices to be heard.

continued on page 8

The fourth verse is that people of different cultural traditions will also eagerly discern and answer their call to become Companions. Our community in the United States was born to serve people who came here from different countries. Today many people from countries around the world call America home, despite the message they sometimes receive that they are not welcome. Many people from different cultural traditions understand what it means to be a minister of reconciliation because they have stood outside the circle and were not welcomed in. They have lived out Precious Blood spirituality in the core of their being without even knowing what it was. By entering into relationship with people from different cultural traditions in this country, our Companions would be stronger, as well as grow in their faith through the example of people who come from different cultural traditions and backgrounds.

The final verse is my dream that Companions and members can continue to foster relationships and truly begin to minister together in service to the community. Our Companions have many talents and gifts that they would love to offer to the community. I hope that as we move into the future we can trust each other and have confidence that we are all working for the common good. Companions value and care for the community as much as you members do. I hope that in the future that Companions will be allowed to work together with you for the good of the community that we are care deeply about.



Congregation at the gathering at Techny Towers

I conclude with a writer from this generation who reminds us of the importance of this moment as we dream about the future. In the hit musical “Hamilton” Lin Manuel Miranda wrote, “History has its eyes on you.” History has its eyes on us today. Our community comes from a long line of dreamers who looked



Vicky Otto and Fr. Richard Bayuk visiting during the gathering

into the future with conviction as they carried forth the message of reconciliation and renewal. Will we continue with the same visionary boldness or will we get let obstacles and challenges deter us? I hope that we will do our ancestors proud in this moment. The powerful play of our future will go on. We have a verse to contribute. Let’s make it count. ✦

Fr. Alvin Herber, continued from page 3

put the parish plant to bed.” But rather than walking through the buildings and rooms and turning on lights as he went, he would instead carry a flashlight. He didn’t want to spend the money to pay for the electricity to turn lights on and off as he made sure everything was secure.

He walked around with a flashlight. And one of his favorite TV programs every afternoon, “sacred time” to him, was the soap opera “Guiding Light.” (When he left St. James, the parishioners arranged for him to receive autographed photos from the actors and actresses of the series!) He was for the people wherever he served, a guiding light. He often said to me, “You know, a missionary is at home wherever he finds himself.” And whenever we would be out somewhere for the evening, he would at some point say, “I think it’s time to go home.”

Al, thank you for being a guiding light, pointing out to us the way, the truth, and the life. You knew that you were only the flashlight, that you were pointing all of us in the right direction, not wanting us to get lost in the darkness. Rejoice and be glad, Al, for you have come to Mt. Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. To myriads of angels who accompany with song and trumpets, and to a blood that speaks more eloquently than that of Abel. You are home. Turn off the light. You don’t need it, because your light now reflects the one who is the Way, the Truth, the Life. ✦



Companions Retreat at Marillac Center

Retreat Reflection

by Kansas City Companion Becky McDonnell

As I entered the property on which the Marillac Center in Leavenworth is located, I felt the secular world fade away. I smiled and remembered that even before I had thought about becoming a Catholic, I had experienced this same feeling as I had visited the Sisters of St. Francis convent near my home. I thought about the contrast, having just driven past the Lansing state prison, which looks like a medieval dungeon, and the beautiful grounds on which I now was. As I drove into the visitor's parking lot, I thought, "Wow—covered parking!"

The first two people I encountered inside the Marillac center were Vicki Otto and Fr. Joe Nassal, who greeted me with smiles and big hugs. I knew I was with family who loved me. I thanked God again for the privilege of being a part of this group.

Marillac center is absolutely beautiful! My room was so welcoming and inviting. The food was very good, with a wide variety. And of course, right across the hall was a room full of snacks and drinks—leave it to this group to always provide an abundance of food and fellowship!

I really enjoyed the worship services. The liturgy and music flowed together and I experienced some

new hymns—always a plus for a church musician. And I had the privilege of reading the Old Testament reading at our Sunday Mass—a first for me, since I'm usually at the organ during Mass on weekends.

The vision and dreams which Fr. Joe shared with us were beyond words. I sensed the power and direction of God for and with us. He has called us to make a difference in this world. Yet, change is most difficult for us all—especially when it comes at God's direction—because so much of our environment works in opposition to our goals and dreams.

The service of reconciliation was a special blessing for me. Even after being a Catholic for over ten years, I was still uncomfortable with the process. I did not have a problem with the fact that I was a sinner—after all, I was raised as a Baptist! But what to say and how to say it to a priest. I always felt I stumbled over words and thoughts and never conveyed what I really wanted to say.

While I waited my turn to confess, I was nervous, but comforted by the thought, "It will be all right." As I sat across from Fr. John Wolf, I felt only love and acceptance. I shared with him my feelings and thoughts

continued on page 13

Bursting Bubbles

by Hector Avitia, Precious Blood Volunteer at PBMR



Precious Blood Volunteer Hector Avitia

“Oh man, I can’t wait to see their bubbles burst,” I said with a chuckle as I sipped my chicory coffee. It was a nice April afternoon in the Back of Yards Mexican restaurant La Cecina. Tim Deveney and

I were discussing how the culture shock of working with marginalized populations was a “bubble” buster for many volunteers who just graduated college. The bubble symbolizes our worldview based on our experiences. A lot of folks who have been fortunate enough to have had most of their needs met and only known about suffering through books and film, have their world view, or bubble, broken open when they meet suffering head on. As someone who had already been in the workforce for seven years and personally experienced poverty, discrimination, and fear of authorities as a child, I believed I was better equipped to handle the problems that the families of south side Chicago were going through. I was going to be the wise old man that guided the other volunteers through the landscape of suffering and sit back with a bag of popcorn as their bubbles burst into a million pieces.

Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (PBMR) is a place of hope, healing, and radical hospitality. In order to achieve these goals, we must establish strong, meaningful relationships with those we serve. It is a long road filled with tons of bumps and detours because the folks of these communities have been living through ongoing trauma almost all of their lives. Trust is a commodity in this place where even friends and family have turned on each other, sometimes culminating into gun violence. The natural response from the human mind when these things happen is to be cautious of whom to trust. When anyone new comes into their lives, even when their intent is to help, their

automatic response is to be careful and put up walls to protect themselves. Because of my background, I believed I had a shortcut to this process of fostering relationships with the young men that I was to be case managing. I think PBMR should have a warning sign outside of the door that reads “This is a place of hope, healing, and radical hospitality... Please leave your ego at the door.”

After only a few weeks into the volunteer experience, I had to come to the harsh reality that my own “tough” upbringing is nothing compared to the struggles of the people to whom we are ministering. One of my firsts tasks at PBMR involved helping a young family get on the road to stability. In order to protect their privacy, I cannot say much more, but I can say that I was completely overwhelmed by the obstacles they were facing. I imagined myself in their situation and what I would do to get ahead. Surely, I could give them great advice by putting myself in their shoes—but immediately I realized how their and my own scenarios were so very different. Even though financial resources were not always there, I always had around me a consistent group of people that loved me and who would do anything for me if I was in trouble. I never had to use their help because I didn’t have an emergency, and I became blind to the treasure that was my network of family and friends.

So, there I am, sitting in a room with a young family that was relying on my help and guidance to avoid homelessness with their young daughter. I was like a deer caught in headlights, stunned and unable to act. And this was supposed to be the “easy” case, something simple that would help ease me into dealing with tougher cases. If I was no good for them now, how was I supposed to be helpful to the rest of the guys I was case managing? How was I going to develop relationships with these young men if my only “Ace up my sleeve” was my not-so-harsh upbringing? I was too concerned with other people’s bubbles to see that my own bubble didn’t stand a chance.

While things seemed dark in this extremely young journey of service, God’s grace found a way to shine through. Fr. David Kelly gave a lecture to a group of

continued on page 13

South Side Hospitality

by Sr. Bela Mis, C.P.P.S.

As part of my second year of Novitiate, I had the opportunity to learn, meet and share more closely in the Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation in Chicago (PBMR). How can I describe my experience during these three months? PBMR is a special and unique place; the first thing that you notice is that every person is welcome! When people come into the center there is always a cup of coffee or tea to offer them. This is a very nice way to welcome each person and make them feel special and honored. Sitting down then at the welcome table, a very pleasant conversation is usually initiated with some of the young people who attend the program or with one of the mothers or some other visitor. This gives a warm feeling and a sense of being at home.

During my three-month summer experience, I had the opportunity to interact with many different people in various activities. One was helping in the garden. Being there I began to realize how the people marvel at seeing the garden with so many fresh vegetables. It was very nice to see happy people leaving the garden with their vegetables and talking about how they would prepare them. The garden and flowers located in the center of the Reconciliation Center offer the neighbors a nice and healing space to meet and contemplate the beauty of God in nature.

I was able to realize that the needs that come each day to PBMR are diverse, and often times difficult to hear. However, what is important is the offering of time to listen, just being present, providing a safe place where stories can be told and youth can share their fears and concerns in circle with others who understand. It is about giving a helping hand, and encouraging our youth to discover their talents—and to dream of living beyond the age of 25. This type of presence may not be noticeable to the naked eye, but so helps our youth feel supported and motivated to continue making their way toward a better future.

As a native Guatemalan, it is very exciting for me to see PBMR inviting the Hispanic families who live in the neighborhood to a closer relationship. Because I speak Spanish I was able to assist with connecting Hispanic families with PBMR. As I became more acquainted with the neighborhood, I could welcome



Sr. Bela Mis and one of the neighborhood children at PBMR

our Hispanic neighbors to the Restorative Justice Café at PBMR. There we had space and time to talk about different topics and the many struggles that they have to face. We gathered and shared stories, food, and laughter, showing solidarity with each other but also celebrating our joys and having such a welcoming place.

The opportunity to share with the mothers that participate in PBMR made me think a lot about God's love. This is because when someone asks how much can a mother love her child, the answer could be that a mother has a heart large enough to love into infinity. The truth is that their love does go beyond to the infinite, because they walk with their children regardless of the circumstances. Some of the families have children incarcerated, murdered, caught up in the streets—and yet they remain steadfast in their love for their children. It is an example of unconditional love; the same love God has for all of us!

This has been an experience of Faith and Action for me, because the Amen that I profess in the Eucharist and that I will profess on December 9th

continued on page 13

Love is Coming for Us All: An Advent Reflection

by Gabino Zavala, Peace & Justice Director

Advent is a time that directs our minds and hearts to the coming of Christ. Jesus is Emmanuel, the hope of all peoples. He is the wisdom that teaches and guides us, the Savior of every nation. Advent reminds us of Christ's promise. We hear Him say: "Do not be afraid!" Jesus brings us light and hope in the midst of darkness.

While many of us will be preparing with joyful expectation for the coming of Jesus during this Advent Season, there are some of our sisters and brothers who live in fear and anxiety. Those that we call Dreamers, young men and women who are the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), live with an uncertain future. They feel powerless, robbed of their dreams, promises made to them taken back. For them Advent is certainly a time of hopeful expectation and a time of longing.

Let me share the stories of two of these young people.

I came to the United States when I was six. I realized the limitations I faced when I started thinking about college. Universities saw me as an international student with outrageous tuition rates. Scholarships had citizen requirements. When Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals first began, so many doors opened for me. I could accomplish my dreams of being a teacher in the only country I have ever known.

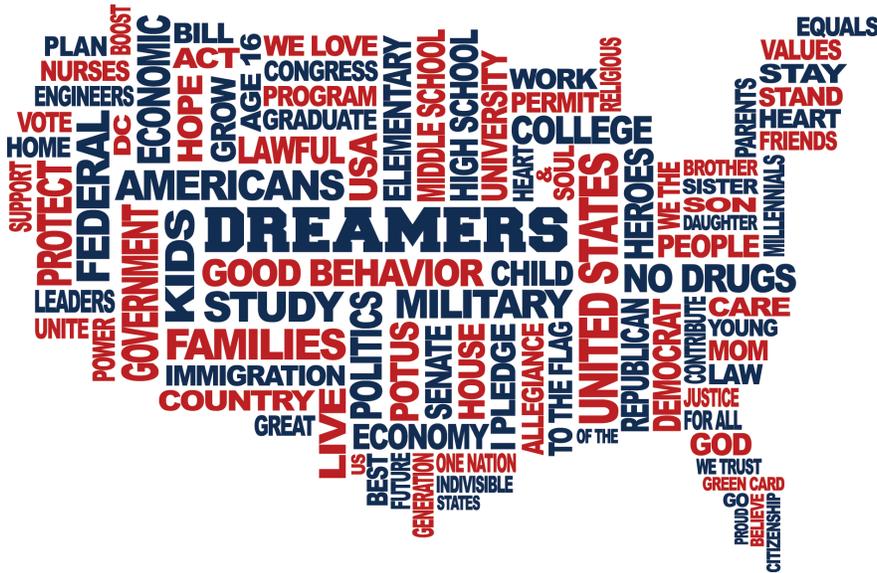
Fast forward five years since DACA was established. I can now proudly say that I will be graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Education this

December. My dreams of teaching English Language Learners in a low-income school is becoming a reality. I want to inspire my students and be a first-hand example that in this country, we can accomplish our goals regardless of our circumstances.

When President Trump recently ended *DACA*, everything changed. My first thought was disbelief. I feel powerless knowing everything that I have worked so hard for is being ripped up and taken from me. I cannot explain how frustrated I feel not knowing what's going to happen in a year (when my *DACA* expires). What if congress does nothing? What if I can't work? What if I can't attend graduate school? What if I get deported?

What will I do in a country I don't remember? I cringe at the thought of being sent away from the country I consider home. They are robbing us of our dreams even when we have done nothing wrong. I would like to say that I'm not scared, but that would be a lie. Regardless of this, we will not stop fighting. My frustration is fueling my persistence as I protest and voice my concerns. We all must act and let our lawmakers know we are here to stay.

All my life, as far back as I can remember, I have wanted to be a Nurse and work hard for my parents and make them proud. My last high school year went great. I graduated in hopes of starting college in the fall. Everything was going fine until this past September when President Trump announced he was going to eliminate *DACA*. My dreams and hopes came crashing down, and I couldn't help the sadness I was feeling and showing this sadness on my face. I am the first generation of my entire family



to go to college. When the news of the ending of the DACA program was announced, I feared not just for me but for my family. I had worked so hard to get into the college I wanted to attend. Then in less than a month my dream of attending college would be interrupted in a way I didn't expect. I cried most of that day, as people tried to explain to me what the president had said, but I was still hesitant. I thought to myself that it's not fair that all the work we did and sacrifices we made could be for nothing, because some people have different ideas on issues, and even view us as criminals. My parents reassured me and made it very clear that they could support me in any way possible and that this news shouldn't bring me down or tear down my hopes of becoming the first generation to finish college.

For the past three years I have been working with children over the summer and right now I am a substitute at an early child center, but I don't want to be just a substitute. I want to become a teacher and once I have my teaching degree I will start my next project in life which is becoming a nurse. Although college is not free, being a DACA student makes it a bit easier for me to find a job that can help me pay for college.

These young people—and thousands more—will be waiting this Advent with the consolation of the Lord's promise. They will ask, "How do we follow our King?" in the midst of all that is swirling around us. They will live with the original hope that a child is to be born who will heal the rift between humanity and God. As a hopeful people, they will long for a world of fairness, integrity, and justice. During this coming Advent Season, they remain awake, carrying on with their lives in the midst of the challenges that they face. They will wait with joyful anticipation longing for something good that is coming. ✦

South Side Hospitality, continued from 11

when I make my first vows as a Sister of the Precious Blood, invites me to meet my brothers and sisters who suffer in different ways in our society with that same unconditional love. I feel my main call is to love, to serve, and to walk with the suffering even when it is not easy. It is Christ who unites us through his Precious Blood and invites us to be Eucharist, to be givers of life in our broken world, to bring hope, healing and hospitality, especially to those who feel "far off." ✦

Companions Retreat, continued from 9

and we talked. He held both of my hands with both of his, and I knew that indeed he had the authority—passed down through the ages—to do what Jesus had told the apostles to do: to forgive sins and reconcile us to Christ and each other. A warm feeling washed over me, and I felt forgiveness, unconditional love, acceptance, and a real peace and reconciliation with Christ and my brothers and sisters.

I left the retreat reconciled, renewed, and full of hope. I sense an ability of our Precious Blood members and Companions to fulfill our part in God's plan to bring forth His kingdom, and to end evil, violence, poverty and injustice in this world which God created so lovingly for us. May it be so! ✦

Bursting Bubbles, continued from page 10

students and faculty at the University of Notre Dame. In his talk he mentioned how, despite his many years of leading PBMR and being involved in the lives of those he serves, he has only stories to share. They are stories, because he was not the one going through the suffering. He recognizes that he can be empathetic, but there is no real way to completely suffer the same pain as those he serves. It became clear that having a similar past to those we help is not a qualification to build a positive and long-lasting relationship with them. What matters is to recognize this limitation and to still be willing to give your time and effort to help those in need. I like to think that when we encounter new people with different perspectives, then it is up to us to decide if these experiences burst our bubble, or if they help us grow that world view to encompass more people. ✦



Find Us on the Web!
preciousbloodkc.org
Go there for:
Province Events
The Weekly Wine Press
The New Wine Press
and more!

THE **New Wine** PRESS
Precious Blood Center
P.O. Box 339
Liberty MO 64069-0339

Change Service Requested

Is God Calling You to a Precious Blood Life?



Discernment Retreat

November 3-5, 2017

St. Charles Center
2860 U.S. Route 127
Celina, Ohio 45822

For men discerning a vocation as a Precious Blood priest or brother.

Contact Fr. Timothy Armbruster, C.P.P.S.,
vocations@preciousbloodkc.org for more information.